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Rabbis in Syria and Babylonia (Irak). Chapters xi. to xviii. give the ceremonial differences between the Qaraitic sects mentioned above. Finally the last chapter treats of ritual differences between the Qaraïtes of the time of our author and earlier, from the sects mentioned above.

It is certain that Jehudah Hadasi, in his book with the title of *אשכול הכופר* § 91 (MS. 88), made use of Qirqisani's present treatise, either in the original Arabic or in a Hebrew translation. Whether Arabic writers, such as Masudi, Sharestani and more especially Maqrizi, who treat more or less of Jewish sects, knew Qirqisani's work is doubtful. This will have to be carefully investigated by any one who undertakes to give us the history of the Jewish sects according to Arabic and Hebrew sources. But it is difficult to take advantage of Dr. Harkavy's learned introduction to his present monograph, because it is written in Russian, a language nearly unknown to Jewish scholars out of Russia. The same is the case with the Hungarian monthly *Szemle*, which has often useful pages concerning Jewish literature, that are lost for all except those who are educated in the Hungarian schools. The result is that they are consequently passed over, which will be the case also with articles and essays written in Russian. Patriotism is not necessarily shown either by language or by religion. We hope that Mr. Thatcher, of Mansfield College, Oxford, who is busy with a monograph on the Jewish sects, will be able to make more ample use of Dr. Harkavy's learned essay, than we could, by the kind assistance of Mr. W. Morfill, Slavonic Reader in the University of Oxford. He will moreover give Hadassi's information according to MSS., and not according to the mutilated edition of Gozlow (Crimea).

A. NEUBAUER.

*Studien zur Geschichte der Orthographie des Althebräischen* von Dr. LEO BARDOWICZ, Rabbiner der Israelit. Gemeinde in Moedling, Francfort-on-the-Main, J. Kauffmann, 1894, viii. and 112 pp.

THE object of Dr. Bardowicz's treatise is to demonstrate that the vowel letters *alef*, *hē*, *nāw*, and *yōd* were not used so frequently in the Bible MSS. of the Talmudic epoch as in the masoretic text. He maintains Wellhausen's theory that the employment of the vowel letters was

left to the choice of the scribes, but that the orthography was definitely fixed in the first century, or later on by the Masora. Supplementing this Dr. Bardowicz tries to show that this deficiency of vowel letters lasted several centuries longer. He supports his theory not only by passages from Talmud and Midrāsh with varying orthography, but also by the assertion that in those times the *matres lectionis* were easily dispensed with. On the other hand he endeavours to point out that the rabbinical prohibition of writing defectiva *plene* and plena *defective* was not known till the time of Maimūni. Considering the complicated and rather unsettled nature of the subject, a lucid exposition of the way in which the vowel letters gradually penetrated the text of the Bible would be of the highest importance. In reading Dr. Bardowicz's book we cannot help appreciating the clearness of his propositions, the methodical arrangement of the matters under discussion, and particularly his intimacy not only with the literatures from which he draws his arguments, but also with the writings of modern scholars on the subject.

It is, however, a different question whether our real knowledge of the subject has been furthered by Dr. Bardowicz's learned investigations. Do we now see clearer when and how the vowel letters—and this is the *punctum saliens*—came to be employed in the earliest copies of the Old Testament? This is doubtful. The uncertainty in this respect remains the same as before. It is significant how cautiously Noeldeke expresses himself in his review of Wellhausen's theory on the subject which Dr. Bardowicz otherwise justly considers the most important progress in the investigation of the question. Now Chwolson, in his essay on the quiescent letters, starting from the example of the Old Phœnician inscriptions, is justified in drawing conclusions for Hebrew, but he decidedly goes too far. The Mesha inscription (ninth century), the genuineness of which is no more doubted, and of which the language more nearly approaches the Hebrew of the Old Testament than the Phœnician, shows in contradistinction to the latter a rather regular employment of the vowel letters at the end of words, and an occasional one in the middle. In the Siloah stone, which is more than one hundred and fifty years younger, and written in the best biblical style, we find vowel letters at least regularly in the *Auslaut*. Dr. Bardowicz has omitted to take these facts into account at all, but they certainly give more conclusive evidence than the far younger sources, by means of which he endeavours to prove the contrary. The quotations from Ben Asher are rather colourless, as they admit both full and defective scriptions. The second one is, moreover, incorrectly translated, as מפי חכמים עשויים simply means, "From the mouth of doctors instituted," and probably does not refer to "the sages" in the rabbinical sense at all. Dr. Bardowicz himself cannot help

admitting that the orthography of Talmud and Midrāsh as handed down to us, is itself open to much comment. The passage from the Midrāsh quoted (sub. D) may serve as an example where, as Dr. Bardowicz rather timidly suggests, we should naturally read, כל חטא שבמקרא יתר א (instead of חסר), signifying that the א—just as in יירא, sub. E—is quiescent (in contradistinction to other forms, as Num. xv. 24, etc.). From Benveniste's observation we only gather that the evidences from Talmudical passages are not absolutely to be relied on. Their defective orthography may also have other reasons, such as economy of space, time, writing material, etc.

In this confusion, the real solution of the question may be found midway. We have in all probability to distinguish between the official text preserved in the Scrolls, and copies manufactured for public and private studies. As to the former, it will apparently remain difficult to come to any safe conclusion at all ; but with respect to the latter, greater liberty may have been allowed, and here Dr. Bardowicz's arguments are also much more satisfactory. In particular those adduced in Chap. II. deserve attention. At all events, Dr. Bardowicz has, with great industry and learning, compiled a large mass of valuable material, for which we are indebted to him.

H. HIRSCHFELD.

ספר יצירה *Das Buch der Schöpfung. Nach den sämtlichen Recensionen möglichst kritisch redigirter Text, nebst Uebersetzung, Varianten, Anmerkungen, Erklärungen und einer ausführlichen Einleitung*, von LAZARUS GOLDSCHMIDT. Frankfort-on-the-Main : J. Kauffmann (in commission). 1894.

MR. GOLDSCHMIDT does not seem to be satisfied with the lesson given him by Dr. Neubauer in the *Guardian* (May, 1894), although its explicitness left nothing to be desired. However unpleasant the task, we must estimate his latest production at its true value, lest those who hope to find a scientific work be disappointed. Mr. G. correctly anticipates that his *Schroffheit*—or rather impertinence—will meet with disapprobation, but this “does not induce him to suppress the truth.” There is a great difference between truth, or what he styles truth, and the arrogance with which a tyro criticises Zunz, Graetz, and other scholars, in terms which would even be quite unbecoming between equals in age and importance. His translation of the beginning of Saadyah's *Arabic Commentary* is wrong. Saadyah does not